

(PHILADELPHIA)
citypaper



PHILADELPHIA'S INDEPENDENT WEEKLY NEWSPAPER
June 10 - June 17, 2010 #1997 | www.citypaper.net

► **AGENDA** | It's a Pride thing
THEATER | Always Sunday in Philadelphia ♦ **SOAPBOXER** | Our crisis, too

A LANDLORD DROPPED
A BOMB ON KENSINGTON.
IT COULD HAPPEN AGAIN.
BY ISAIAH THOMPSON

DEFAULT LINES



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PIXIES

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SEPTEMBER 7 AT 8PM
ON SALE MONDAY AT 10AM

★ The Black Crowes ★

*Come celebrate the momentous occasion
of our 20th Anniversary!*

You are cordially invited to join us for the

"Say Goodnight To The Bad Guys" 2010 Tour

†
*A Three Hour Evening:
Acoustic Flare D'oeuvres
& Electric Reception
with The Black Crowes*

*We look forward to seeing you.
Keep below. Informal attire requested.*



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ANGELUS
THEATRE

Friday, October 29 at 8pm
On Sale Friday at 10am!

SPEND AN UNLIMITED NIGHT!



THIS TUESDAY, JUNE 15 AT 7:30PM



THURSDAY, JULY 8 AT 8PM



JULY 20 AT 7:30PM



BUY
TICKETS AT
LIVENATION.com

ALL ticketmaster OUTLETS, 1-800-745-3888, THE BOOST MOBILE BOX OFFICE AT THE TOWER THEATER (WITH A LUDLOW, UPPER BALLET FIRST DAY OF ON SALE & DAY OF SHOW ONLY) AND THE LIVE NATION BOX OFFICE (111 PRESIDENTIAL BLVD, BALTIMORE, MD)

Concerts at the Delaware River

WATERFRONT RIVERSTAGE & FESTIVALPIER

COLUMBUS RIVER & CHAPMAN BL.

COLUMBUS RIVER & SPRING GARDEN BL.



THIS FRIDAY AT 7PM!
RIVERSTAGE



THURSDAY, JUNE 17 AT 7PM
FESTIVALPIER



SUNDAY, JUNE 20 AT NOON
FESTIVALPIER



JUNE 26 AT 6PM
RIVERSTAGE



NO SERVICE FEE* CONCERT TICKETS MONTH OF JUNE

*No service fee tickets available while supplies last. Parking, shipping and other non-"service fee" costs may apply. Amphitheatre only. June Only

SHE & HIM
FRIDAY, JULY 2 AT 8PM
 RIVER STAGE

311 • THE OFFSPRING
PEPPER
TUESDAY, JULY 13 AT 7PM
FESTIVAL PIER

SUBLIME WITH ROME
MATISYAHU • THE DIRTY HEADS
SATURDAY, JULY 17 AT 7:30PM
FESTIVAL PIER

O.A.R.
CITIZEN COPE
SATURDAY, JULY 24 AT 7PM
 FESTIVAL PIER

THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM
CHAMBERLAIN • TIM BARRY
THURSDAY, JULY 29 AT 7PM
 RIVER STAGE

SHINEDOWN
CHEVELLE • PUDDLE OF MUDD
SEVENDUST • 10 YEARS
FRIDAY, JULY 30 AT 5PM
 FESTIVAL PIER

THE BLACK KEYS
THE MORNING BENDERS
FRIDAY, JULY 30 AT 7:30PM
RIVER STAGE

SLIGHTLY STOOPID
CYPRESS HILL • COLLIE BUDDZ
SATURDAY, JULY 31 AT 7PM
FESTIVAL PIER

**HONDA CIVIC TOUR PRESENTS
PARAMORE** TEGAN & SARA
NEW FOUND GLORY • KADAWATHA
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4 AT 6:30PM
FESTIVAL PIER

SOMETHING CORPORATE
SUNDAY, AUGUST 8 AT 8:30PM
RIVER STAGE

ST\$9 LOTUS • THE ALBUM LEAF • JOHN HUGHES
SATURDAY, AUGUST 14 AT 6PM
FESTIVAL PIER

GOV'T MULE JACKIE GREENE
TROMBONE SHORTY & ORLEANS AVENUE
SATURDAY, AUGUST 14 AT 5PM
RIVER STAGE

MY MORNING JACKET
SUNDAY, AUGUST 29 AT 7:30PM
RIVER STAGE

BUY TICKETS AT

LIVENATION.COM

LIVE NATION BOX OFFICE (111 PRESIDENTIAL BLVD. BALA CYNWYD, PA),
ticketmaster LOCATIONS AND CHARGE BY PHONE AT 1-800-745-3000



THE MANN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Passion Pit

with Special Guest
Tokyo Police Club



JUNE 27

FAITH NO MORE

THE SECOND COMING



SAT · JULY 3

KEANE

LIVE IN CONCERT

INGRID MICHAELSON and FRAN HEALY
TRANS

SAT · AUG 7



with
The Violents

AUG 15

THE
MANN
CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

FURTHER FEATURING PHIL LESH & BOB WEIR · SAT & SUN · JULY 10 & 11

FAIRMOUNT PASS - PHILADELPHIA
HennCenter.org

TICKETS AT TICKETMASTER.COM

PHONE: CHARGE 800-745-3000 - TICKETPHILADELPHIA.ORG
215-653-1999 - MANN CENTER BOX OFFICE (NO SERVICE CHARGE)





NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL'S WORLD'S TOUGHEST FIXES

PRESENTS "PHILLY MEGA FIX"
THURSDAY, JUNE 10TH AT 9:00P.M.

Get behind the scenes and see how SEPTA keeps the wheels of one of the world's longest transit agencies spinning. Watch the men and women of SEPTA change freight railway turnouts, lay steel rails and keep 12,000-volt electrical wires. It's all in a day's work to keep the buses, trains and trolleys running smoothly. Learn how SEPTA does it.

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Only At 12th Street!

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Offer ends 6/30/10

Refreshing Pool • City View Sundeck • Spacious Spa

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Sun & Splash members enjoy a specially reduced, start-up fee. Advertised price is for paid-in-full new members only; several other affordable membership & payment plans are listed.

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A real tan every time!

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PHOTO: JEFFREY M. HARRIS/ALAMY; ILLUSTRATION: JEFFREY M. HARRIS/ALAMY

FURTHER

SUMMER FUN

WIN BACK SEATS TO FURTHER

and

Dinner at Capebana • Mural Arts Love Letter Tour

Dinner at Café Nola • Magic Gardens Tour

Dinner at London Grill

go to citypaper.net/win



sportscomplex

By B. James Steele

(OTHER) CUP CRAZY

> LET'S BE HONEST: Even with little more than a happy hour and a morning coffee between us and the World Cup, you probably still don't know what all the fuss is about. That is because here in Philadelphia there are three (and only three) types of soccer fans. You're probably the third.

Type 1: The expatriate. For those who grew up in Philly, interest in world geopolitical dashes — South Korea versus Greece — is small. For those with an actual rooting interest, the World Cup is a spirited kick back to their home lands. While we enjoy their off-key patriotic songs, it's not nothing we can teach them that they don't already know.

Type 2: The douchebag. They will wax on about this four beautiful months spent abroad junior year when they "discovered the beauty of footy" while getting drunk on their parents' dime. Every fourth year that group emerges in non-stavro colors, takes loudly about their favorite Premier League team and refers to football as "American football" in totally inappropriate settings.

Fifthly, Type 3: You. (We know you're the third type because you're still reading. Regrets disregard my opinion after I rated myself as an American.) The douches all left in a huff when I mocked them for saying "footy," the dummies of them making this far are about as high as their Arsenal jersey getting them laid. (Yes, however, enjoy shoving, dig boots-in and headbanging on the type of emotional moment that grows most tied to reserve for the birth of their first daughter. As such, you probably haven't done the leg work to catch up on the who's who of the upcoming month. That's where we come in. We'll need a bookie to catch you up on 32 teams and 80 years of history, but the answers to these commonly asked questions should allow you to buddy up to the experts and shoot down the douchebags.)

Who is playing? Uza, the world! Countries from Switzerland to Serbia to South Korea are entered. Spain and Brazil are the clear favorites, England and the Netherlands both have talent for days but love to choke, and Argentina has the best player in the world (Messi) and the greatest coach (Maradona, who was Messi's before Messi was) — always a dangerous combination. The Ivory Coast is the class of Africa, but thanks to an injury to their lone star — Drogba, who broke his arm last week — they may end up as irrelevant as the U.S.A.

Where? South Africa, which appears about as prepared for this as Larry King was for Jerry Seinfeld. Press outlets are being flown in from across the globe; reporters talk openly about the likelihood of being kidnapped, and already 35 fans were injured in a stampede for tickets.

I'm not reading this nonsense, but I do love talking points. Not really a question, but for snark. Here are conversation starters for the inevitable commercial breaks: 1.) During games

the naked city

you will hear something called a varanella, which, contrary to popular opinion, is not a dirty word. They are plastic transparent loud enough to make a seagull coughing irrelevant, and they will be played nonstop. 2.) Maradona, the former great banned Argentine coach, is returning from the short ban he received for driving over a photographer's foot with his car (this accounts for a man of being "an asshole" for getting his foot in the way. 3.) Giuseppe Rossi, born and raised in New Jersey, would have been a mainstay starter in the American team. But the forward repeatedly rejected U.S. overtures in hopes of making Italy's defending champs. Last week he was among

Giuseppe Rossi will be watching at home with the rest of us.

the final one — he'll be watching at home with the rest of us.

4.) North Korea, which qualified for its first cup since 1966, has already folded up in an apparent attempt to game the system. The North Korean coach tried to sneak starter Kim Myong-won onto the roster as his third goalie. Soccer governing body FIFA, notepad, and now Kim will only be allowed to enter the pitch on goal.

Let's get to the important stuff: Where can I booze?

Great question. Thanks to ESPN winning the broadcast rights and promoting the fuck out of it, "sports" changed from a handful of sports bars to the more helpful "everywhere." Still, here are some places that all are going to be competing it up. Phil is shutting down 15th and Locust to show the games in an 18-foot screen, while Dark Horse Pub, 390, O'Neal's, Field House and New Dick promise specials, early openings and unannounced fans on the premises.

4.) James Steele won't stop him for soccer. Ask him to stop at a James Steele's dog park.

...the aroma of cotton candy on a balmy summer night illuminated by flashing and whirling lights, the air punctuated with the sounds of people screaming, seagulls squawking and ocean waves lapping...

Come experience the real Jersey Shore.

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A RECREATION RESORT
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1 giant and beautiful beach. 2 huge, beautiful waterparks... 3 cotton-picked amusement rides. Countless family memories!

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JUNE 14-20 2010
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All events are free and open to the public,
and held rain or shine. For a complete
schedule, visit : cliffordbrownjazzfest.com

WILMINGTON, Delaware

Monday, JUNE 14, 2010

JAZZ FESTIVAL KICK-OFF ... check website for more information.

RODNEY SQUARE performances:

Tuesday, JUNE 15

8:00 pm - John Pizzarelli Swing 7
6:30 pm - Champion Fulton Trio



Wednesday, JUNE 16

8:00 pm - Jerry Gonzalez and the Fort Apache Band
6:30 pm - Omar Sosa Afreecanos Quartet

Thursday, JUNE 17

8:00 pm - TBA
6:30 pm - Ravi Coltrane Quartet



Friday, JUNE 18

9:00 pm - Marcus Miller - Tutu Revisited, the music of Miles Davis with featured guest artist Christian Scott
7:30 pm - JukeJoint Tight
6:00 pm - USAF Satellite Jazz Ensemble

Saturday, JUNE 19

8:00 pm - Chick Corea Freedom Band
6:30 pm - Pyeng Threadgill

Starting around noon - times TBA

Jose Carmona III
Young Artists Revue
Mark Williams Quintet
Fostina Dixon and the Winds of Change
Tony Williams Ensemble



Sunday, JUNE 20

4:00 pm - Jazz Vespers at the Episcopal
Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew



Thank You, Sponsors -

Through your generous support, we have been able to keep the East Coast's largest jazz festival alive and well for over 20 years.



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BY ISAIAH THOMPSON

DEFAULT LINES



SATURDAY, JUNE 12TH
7:30AM - 6PM

PHILLY'S BIGGEST WORLD CUP BLOCK PARTY

AT 2:30 PM

USA



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ENGLAND



irish pub
& restaurant

FOOD & DRINKS OUTSIDE
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LIVE MUSIC

7:30 AM SOUTH KOREA v GREECE
10:00 AM ARGENTINA v NIGERIA

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JUNE 11 - JULY 11

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WORLD CUP FEVER!

Your Guide to Where to Watch the World Cup
June 11th - July 11th

Check back each week to find out which of your favorite pubs will be showing the World Cup Games.

Also check out www.citypaper.net/Worldcup for individual bar specials and game times

**4 WEEKS.
64 GAMES.
1 WORLD CUP.**



WATCH THEM ALL ON OUR GIANT SCREENS!

DAY 1 2010 GAMES
Saturday, June 12th
Argentina vs. Nigeria @ 8:00am
England vs. USA @ 8:00am
Tuesday, June 15th
Italy vs. Germany @ 8:00am
Thursday, June 17th
Spain vs. Mexico @ 8:00pm



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Friday June 11th

Kick off with Carlsberg!
\$3 pints during the game

Saturday June 12th

Yards takes over Fairmount!
Discount pints at Yards

Coming up...

Great Lakes and Ithaca Brewing specials, Soccer Queens and Philadelphia Union ticket giveaways!

W Qbbq & tequila

53 Muller Live
54 Classic Margaritas

WATCH ON OUR BIG SCREEN TV'S

PHILADELPHIA
JUNE 11TH
JULY 11TH

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HEY SMARTY-PANTS,

YOU THINK YOU'RE SOOOO SMART, DON'T YOU?

CHECK OUT
CITYPAPER.NET/QUIZZO
FOR ALL YOUR QUIZZO NEEDS

THE MISFORTUNATES | ■
At 13 years old, Gauthier (Kamari
Vanoverden) is already too aware of
how badly things can go wrong. Aban-
doned by his mother, living with his
father, Mami (Kane De Graaf), and
three uncles, he watches them drink

ice pack
Ex. 4.0. Answer:[illegible][illegible]

de_america@citymagazine.net

the agenda

LIVINGSTON ISLAND NET 1, JUNE 50 - JUNE 52

[Your to-do list, no matter what you're doing]



BOYZONE. Hunk in colorful spandex? Check.

1. Festival 2

REUNION

Gather up your nearest and dearest. It's Philly Philly time! **By Josh Middleton**

Whether you identify as L, G, B, T or just plain as Q, we're all members of the same family. It's a chance for the entire community to converge in celebration of the trait that binds us — magnificent gayness. We want you to get the most out of this time of togetherness, so we've put together the ultimate Pride itinerary. All we ask is that you wave your proud rainbow flag and sing to the heavens, "We are Family."

→ ANANTA APNA SINGH-ALONG

It wasn't Mary's finest moment, but a good guy can't deny the magic of ASBA. Hosted by Charley and Carotta, this viewing song-along not only gives spectators an opportunity to see their vocal prowess, it's also a way to escape the heat. Prize-giver Franz Pinc suggests bringing a water gun to squirt fans whenever they appear on the screen. This will also come in handy when it's time to douse that Christina wannabe trying to snag over the nest of the crowd. Sat. June 12, 8 p.m., *see Great Place at the End of the Road*. **Food and Christian treats:** *phillyvibe.com*

by THILLY DYKE MARCH

The name sounds otherwise, but the lady of Philly Drive

March welcome anyone who wants to get fired up! This is a way to draw positive attention to the lesbian community and create a platform for social activism. When the rally dies down, the party will continue at the park. Keep your eyes peeled for performances by the Liberty City Kings, LYFE Dance and spoken word from Poet, Poetess and Politick. Sat., June 22, 3-6:30 p.m., free. Kake Park, 1208 and Pine streets. facebook.com/ohohohvibrantch.

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Whip out your pride moves.

PHILLY PHOENIX FESTIVAL

The official Pride Fest is the march/parade on top of the rainbow. Banned from *Mad Max's Drag Race*, the Liberty City Drag Queens and Jennifer Condo (Legally Blonde's help) make up the six hours of entertainment scheduled throughout the day. Price says the celebration will be sectioned off into beahty and family zones for all your responsible needs and a dance area so you can whip out your hottest pride moves. You better work. **Sat., June 11, noon to 6 p.m. / 205 Great Plains at Penn's Landing**

(questi modelli sono ancora per metà)

YOU WANT TO BE LISTED?
 Send information by mail to: **City People Listings**, 401 Chester St., Third Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19106, e-mail: citypeoplelistings@aol.com or fax: 215-621-9236 or **Maely Ruffalo**, featured columnist for the event, dates, times, address of venue, telephone number and admission price. *City People* will be received on time 10 days before the event, unless of publication. *Citypeople* advertisements will not be considered unless information is truly accepted near the place.

✦ ACTION/

✦ DANCE

✓ DANCE, DRINK CLUB IS 20TH ANNIVERSARY IN RUNS **BLACK** begins this week at 8:30 p.m. 1500 Locust St. get a little wild with it at 4000 Locust St. on Saturday. In celebration and to celebrate the club's 20th birthday, **Black** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event. **Black** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event. **Black** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event.

✦ MUSIC

✓ EARLY MORNING PHOTO **WOLFE** plays early morning photography with local photographer **Wolfe** at 10:00 a.m. 1000 Locust St. on Saturday. **Wolfe** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event. **Wolfe** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event.

✦ MUSIC

✓ PLAY ROCK PRINCE FOR **WOLFE** plays early morning photography with local photographer **Wolfe** at 10:00 a.m. 1000 Locust St. on Saturday. **Wolfe** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event. **Wolfe** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event.

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✓ QUAKERS CITY SOCCER TOUR **NAMBERT** 40 participating in an event at 10:00 a.m. 1000 Locust St. on Saturday. **Nambert** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event. **Nambert** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event.

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✦ COMEDY

✓ DODD BENSON The creator of "The Morning Legend" is coming to the city. **Dodd Benson** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event. **Dodd Benson** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event.

✦ MUSIC

✓ TRASHCAN SINDARS **TRASHCAN SINDARS** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event. **Trashcan Sindars** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event.

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✓ OPERATING MATHS GROUP **SHANE** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event. **Shane** is celebrating its 20th birthday with a special event.

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DEFAULT LINES

negotiating a merger with another bank, getting bad debt off its books was in Republic First's best interest. That merger deal has since fallen through. Republic First CEO Harry Madonina does not return multiple phone calls seeking comment.

On a mid-May morning, Barbara Montanez, a soft-spoken woman in her 30s, showed up in Room 4B of the Philadelphia Municipal Court building looking understandably nervous. Her family was facing eviction and judgment for \$10,000 for 10 months of unpaid rent and other fees.

The city's specialized landlord-tenant court is supposed to help both landlords and renters seek justice more efficiently—but efficiency has an ugly side. Failure to be present at 9 a.m., when the day's roster is called out, usually means an automatic default judgment. The landlords or their attorneys are usually there. Tenants, especially those without care, had better hope the buses are running on time.

Critics have long argued that the system favors landlords and facilitates evictions. Only a handful of each day's 50 or so cases are ever heard by a judge. Instead, defendants (almost always the tenants) are instructed to try to reach an agreement with their landlord (or their landlord's attorney)—a situation that tenant advocates say leads to unnecessary concessions by tenants.

After all, the lawyers know the law, the tenants usually don't. These lawyers are a specialized group of attorneys who appear before the same judges, argue the same types of cases, in the same courtroom, day in and day out. And had Montanez not received pro bono legal assistance from Jennifer Kates, a legislative assistant in Councilwoman Maria Quintana-Stander's office, it's highly unlikely the case would have gone in her favor.

But she got lucky. The day before, Montanez contacted lawyers at Community Legal Services of Philadelphia (CLS), who contacted Kate, who took up Montanez's case.

That morning, Montanez walked into the courtroom carrying a blue three-ring binder filled with photographs documenting the hell in which she'd lived for nearly two years. When she and her family—her husband, Juan, and their six children—moved into their home on the 2000 block of Elmhurst Street in August 2004, it was already a dump. The bedrooms didn't have doors, and there were rotting walls missing in the kitchen. The water heater leaked, so did the roof, spilling water along walls when it rained, which, in turn, led to mold.

The place was a mess, but a man known only as George, a manager for the landlord—Landsend LLC, a Coyle company—promised them the place would soon be fixed up. He added a special extension, the Montanezes say. If they paid their rent, \$800 a month, for one year, they'd own the place, says the Board of Revenue of whose website someone at a market value of \$20,600. The agreement was not put in writing.

After the *Daily News* exposed Coyle's "rent to own" promises, becoming well-known to his tenants. But at the time, it seemed like a hell of a deal.

Before long, the Montanezes say, it became apparent that Landsend had little interest in fixing up their place. And after that first year came and went, they discovered that the rent-to-own promise was empty. A new management company—Aqua Property Solutions, run by Robert Coyle Jr.—refused to honor their claim to the house, they say.

The Montanezes stopped paying rent. Anticipating an eviction notice, Juan Montanez reported his house's condition to the Department of Licenses



14012009
A CLS Counselor
in the Legal Services
of Philadelphia
helps Montanez
to prepare for the
eviction hearing.
Credit: Courtesy of
this author.

and Inspections (L&I). On April 4, L&I filed a complaint against KMF Associates—a company that purchased the Montanezes' house along with 16 others for just over \$1 million from Polmar LLC, another Coyle company, in October 2004—for a litany of code violations.

A few days earlier, on March 29, Montanez and his wife were served with the expected eviction notice. So here they was, appearing in front of Supervising Judge Bradley K. Moss.

Moss, at times, had a hard time with Coyle. At the *Daily News* reported, Moss had earlier discovered via a tip that Coyle had subverted forged rental licenses to his court. And when he learned that the Montanezes' case was associated with Coyle, the judge demanded to KMF's attorney to see the property's owner in court.

That afternoon, Robert Coyle Jr. showed up. When Moss asked him if he represented KMF, he answered affirmatively.

In Montanez's case, the rental license included in the court docket was legitimate. But Kates' inaccurate inquiry based upon L&I violations on the property—something the landlords had done when they filed out the eviction complaint. Moss dismissed the case.

It was a victory for the Montanezes finally—which is now seeking other housing—but a narrow one. Though the Montanezes had a legitimate defense against eviction, they almost certainly wouldn't have known it without legal help.

While laws exist on the city's books to protect tenants living in substandard conditions, there are virtually no mechanisms in place to make sure eviction cases are cross-checked with L&I compliance. And if no one checks, there's nothing stopping landlords from lying on their eviction complaints.

Nor does anyone check the licenses that landlords have to submit to the

AFTER THAT FIRST YEAR CAME AND WENT, THE MONTANEZES DISCOVERED THAT THE RENT-TO-OWN PROMISE WAS EMPTY.

re:view
 Robin Rice on vocals art

THE NEXT GREAT REALITY SHOW?



► **BE BRAVE, RE:concept** live and boy or girls. Show the world your art." Sarah Jessica Parker exhorts 14 mostly young and attractive artists early in the premiere episode of Bravo's latest reality show, *Rank of Art: The Next Great Artist*.

The subject is novel, but it's otherwise a predictable and effective formula packed with prize money, clichés and suspense, as well as some pretty good — and some really bad — artwork.

The show's judges are recognized experts in art or pop, collecting a commerce prize (as NYC gallery owner, another is similar art critic for *New York Magazine*), and the contestants all seem to already have a degree of involvement in their chosen art specialties. Writer and creator Tracy Nguyen, for example, has been involved in *The New York Times* and painter Jordan Santos was a studio assistant to Jeff Koons.

One of the two young contestants has a Hollywood connection: Adeli Fozah, 23, is a UPN reality girl (check out her cuteness from *The Daily 10*—apartment at about 100) and a recent employee of the *Martha Stewart* program. It looks like he may do well on *Rank of Art*.

The grand prize is a solo show at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, a publicity coup for both museum and artist. On the other hand, considering the expenses involved in making art, the top money prize of \$100,000 is surprisingly unimpressive.

Yesterday's challenge: Make a portrait of a fellow contestant. In 15 hours. Early in the show, troupe Neo System's lead singer announced her willingness to critique her peers and absconded with her status with them by making good on that promise. Nevertheless, Neo's process didn't impress subject (Miss Macdonell, who has obsessive compulsive disorder) as was more substantive than the judge's record when they played her

Continued on page 24

SOLO BRAINS
 After years playing with The Ghoulie, Miss Argentina, and Rockology, Blayer Pointdjour is going solo with an album under his own name.

—TODD SARTON

[punk/rock/dub]

ACCESS POINT

Local punk journeyman Blayer Pointdjour bares his soul **By A.D. Amorosi**

At 38, Blayer Pointdjour has lived several lifetimes inside local punk-rock circles. The Newark-born/Smith Polytechnic-bound vocalist/instrumentalist laughs easily about being one of few Black guys in a primarily Caucasian scene. He dived into New Argentine, recorded with PaganMiser Threat producer Don Z, and rocked out with Kid Kropel and The Ghoulie (then known as Hate and War). His brand new debut solo piece, the sweet-spirited *Access Card*, is his most dramatic stuff yet: sample-heavy punk and dub, with spicy soul elements. Add in his stage voice and poignant lyrical sensibility and the results are akin to Garbi's Barkley meeting Big Audio Dynamite. We caught up over e-mail.

City Paper: I know you relocated from Jersey when you were in Miss Argentina. What drew you to the Philly scene for good?

Blayer Pointdjour: Around that time my work ethic with Kid Kropel wasn't getting up with everyone else's, so we decided to part and I went straight into the scene with The Ghoulie. I was living at Stash and then met some South Philly Punks [his current label]. I'd never before the first day I was walking down Wharton with my friend from Syracuse. We saw a bunch of brightly

colored people grilling on the street, and as we walked past they asked us to join them. So we did—that was seven years ago and I'm still down wit' SRP.

CP: Some of what you're doing on *Access Card* stems from your Kid Kropel years, does it not?

Blayer: When I was in Kid, I'd play samples between songs. I wanted to do something that was 100 percent sample, a completely digital project. I can play drums, bass, guitar and piano, so it's a real change of pace to just sing and play samples. Bands are a lot of work, dealing with people who might have good or bad attitudes. New Line's sample, do-a-bit-of-pre-production-in-GarageBand-and-write-lyrics. I write a song a week now, instead of practicing with a band and working on a song for a month.

CP: Was making this record an accident/anything thing?

Blayer: Yeah, you need to get off your chest?

CP: Definitely. I'm 300 percent Italian and grew up listening to gospel/katana when at my Italian church. St. Joseph, or what was in Trent, it has long been ingrained in me. Kropel isn't popular in America because Italians like to keep their culture to themselves, but I've loved it. I've wanted to do a sample project



Continued on page 21

DEFAULT LINES

want to evict tenants. Those licenses are held out by L&L and, in theory, landlords must obtain them before renting a property, or, in other words, they're often obtained just before an eviction. In any event, the licenses aren't tied to any inspections — meaning there's no systematic process to protect tenants from shams.

In 2006, even as he awaited trial (and an eventual conviction) for corruption, former City Councilman Rick Montano ushered through a so-called "rental sustainability" law requiring landlords to meet minimum standards — such as meeting code violations — before L&L issued their rental license. Landlord associations waded after Mayor John Street signed the bill into law. In 2008, the landlord groups persuaded the new Street administration to suspend the law. City Solicitor Shelley Smith said the administration wanted to examine it first. Two years later, that examination is apparently ongoing.

Eight months after the Daily News exposé, a small army of city agencies and go-together groups — CLS, Philadelphia Veterans for the Inland Project, the Mayor's Office of Community Services and Office of Housing and Community Development, the city's Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion program and the office of Commissioner Nicholas Stanbury — are trying to work with the banks to keep people in their homes. But the effort is nascent. At this point, only one bank, Massachusetts-based East River, has played ball, buying its properties back at sheriff's sale and selling it down or so directly to the tenants as far.

The vast majority of the people and properties remain, eight months after the Coyle fallout, in limbo.

A review of a decade's worth of deeds, mortgages, lawsuits and other public documents by City Paper, which has spent months sifting former Coyle tenants, shows that some properties once owned by Coyle are still being managed in apparent violation of city codes.

Coyle, after all, didn't conduct his business alone. City Paper talked to a half-dozen of Coyle's tenants who never met him. They learned much interacting with his property manager, George, and Coyle Jr. It was Coyle Jr., they say, who showed them their apartments and responded to — but didn't fulfill — their repair requests.

Public documents indicate that Coyle Jr. operated his own real-estate businesses — Key Investments and Independent Invest, among others — and that his properties, like his father's, weren't always up to snuff. His companies have been sued scores of times by the city for code-enforcement violations and unpaid utilities.

There is evidence that Coyle Jr. not only assisted in his father's business, but benefited from it, as well.

For instance, court records indicate that Coyle Sr.'s companies did in fact take on his son's debt from Republic First, a \$2.5 million mortgage on a package of properties. Within two years of taking that mortgage, the bank sued Coyle Jr. for defaulting. But when Coyle Sr. took out his \$6.6 million loan from Republic First in 2007, Coyle Jr. effectively assumed his son's debt by adding his own properties to the loan asset. The bank subsequently dropped its claim against Coyle Jr.

Coyle Jr.'s former properties are now among hundreds facing foreclosure (see map on p. 28).

Then there's KMF Associates LLC, the company that tried to evict the



ABANDONED
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Montano family. When Coyle Jr. appeared in Montano's court, he claimed to represent KMF, which in 2004 purchased 17 properties from one of Coyle Sr.'s companies.

While a review of deeds shows that Robert Coyle Sr. has signed some documents as a manager of KMF Associates, another name appears as a signatory "managing member" on KMF documents. Edjo and G Fitzgerald, an attorney with the Center City real estate firm Specter Gaden & Rosen, P.C.

State records list Fitzgerald as KMF Associates' president. The law firm's address, the seventh floor of 1635 Market St., is also listed in state documents as the address for KMF Associates LLC. Fitzgerald's name also appears on deed transfers and loans for KMF Associates LLC — a company with which Coyle Jr. engaged in a transaction of property in 2006, and which was successfully voided by the city for nearly \$20,000 in taxes and unpaid utilities. Last month, KMF Associates filed

three more eviction claims, even though it, too, has filed a slew of lawsuits brought by the city for more than \$16,500 in unpaid bills, taxes and code violations.

Repeated calls to Fitzgerald after seeking clarification on his relationship to KMF Associates and KMF Associates were not returned. (A reporter who showed up at Fitzgerald's office in early June was told that he was unavailable all day.) Calls to Apex Management went unanswered, as well.

Perhaps most worrisome to tenant advocates is that, even after the Daily News report and the specter of Coyle's possible prosecution, many of the conditions that gave rise to Coyle's empire — and got hundreds of his Kensington tenants into an irreparable bind — haven't changed. Recently CLS attorney Kaseita Coleman was knowing Craigslist when she saw an ad for Kensington properties. "Rent then own, we say you when others say no," it read, in capital letters. "Call George" (mailto:thomasp@citypaper.net)

**THE CONDITIONS
THAT GAVE RISE TO
COYLE'S EMPIRE —
AND PUT HIS TENANTS
IN A BIND — HAVEN'T
CHANGED.**

[strong but beautifully ill]

[kaleidoscope]

► soul

My guy, hey, you're in and I have to say: Five years after the *Wishbone* watershed, the mostly female's finally wearing off, but the musical culture of the '90s soul revival is growing steadily stronger. (I'd say 2009's surprise indie MVP *Major Blues* represents the current high-water mark.) Boston's Bill "Paperboy" Reed and his seven-strong *True Love* look like a lock for this year's title (apologies to Sharon Jones), with forthcoming third LP, *Cave* and *Get It* (Capitol), that plug a like a killer set of Wilson Pickett and Tyrone Davis covers, and a reportedly explosive live show to match. Reed and company play the North Star Freely (June 11, nortstarfreely.com).



—K. Ross Hoffman

► spooky music

Few painted, keyboard-drumming, voice-echoing and moaning like a poltergeist kinderperpetrator. — *Phosphenated* is a pretty scary band to behold. But these California girls still conjure up enough hooks and beats and enigmatic words (once in a while) to keep you in sight of the terrestrial plane. *Phosphenated* will launch the slot of *Rock On! Noddy* on Tuesday (June 15, kuzofuselectra.com).

—Patrick Rapp

► performance art

Tonight marks the last of the Live Arts Second Thursday Series (June 10, events-fringe.org) before the entire Philadelphia arts community begins its sacred summertime Fringe preparations ritual. Don't miss local Kosko's *Or Maybe My Mother Was an American Chelemist?* — a dance-theater spoken-word work-in-progress that'll premiere on Sat. this September. Kosko tells me it's "a work that personifies our country, unapologizing as a schizophrenic, depressed, strong but beautifully ill, naive, nurturing creature with a hard history." If that was't yet you there, maybe this will. It's free, and there's booze.

—Carolyn Hookberg

► we are the robots

The title of Dave Koz's new album, *How To Wreck a Nice Playlist* (Stop Stealing Records), is not, in fact, an old-school hip-hop lyric but a speech exclamation trope (see "how to recognize speech" reviewed above). It's a fascinating hook at what he's done: invented for military coding/decoding applications, he's a go-to manual tool for the likes of *Knifeknife* and *Alfreda Bushman*. And any book with an appendix titled "It's not the end of the world: Some final thoughts on *Autotune*" gets a robotic belly rub from me.



—Brian Howard

flickpick [movie review]



THE FISHER KING: Colin Farrell proves he's more than a labored hero in Neil Jordan's neo-fairy tale

ONDINE

[A-] IF NOT THE best (and it's certainly among them), *Ondine* is at least the culminating norm of director Neil Jordan's career. Bringing together harp-achant for fairy tales, which trace from *The Company of Wolves* through *Interview with the Vampire* and beyond, and the lyrical realism of *The Crying Game* and *The End of the Affair*, the movie creates the two in a way that don't become clear until its final reel. Colin Farrell, whose performance likewise synthesizes the best elements of previous lead roles (notably *James*, a West Coast fisherman, struggling to support himself, let alone his wife and disabled daughter, on the meager proceeds of his art. For him, at least, the fish refuse to bite, until one day he finds on his catch and finds a woman (Alaya Fierhield) tangled in his nets, who milk him for *Ondine*. The woman's rough English provides few clues, but her strange, wordless singing makes fish swim around Syracuse, a fish sufficiently rare as to seem magical. His daughter theorizes she may be a selkie, an ancient British re-tort on the mermaid myth — an idea that grows more plausible as the strangeness of her existence sinks in. It's difficult to walk the line between fantasy and the real world without straying too far to one side (or simply cheating), but Jordan masterfully modulates the movie's tone. Even as Syracuse contemplates the impossibility of the movie's tone of Christopher Doyle's cinema work provides a tactile sense of the world around him. When better, Jordan manages to modulate the queerness without making you feel as if you've been led by the nose, you could argue that he's simply exchanged one sort of fairy tale for another: It's more these days to find movies that can create a believable world or make sense of our own. *Ondine* miraculously does both. —Sean Adams

Jordan masterfully modulates the movie's tone.



HABEAS CORPUS

Serialism nearly killed the new music scene.

IT IS ONE of those ironies of the art world that so many masters achieve their greatest fame after death. Not always — Beethoven was the most famous mandrake — but Leonard drew 26,000 mourners to the streets of Vienna — but usually Shostakovich and Ligeti. In some ways were well-regarded, if controversial, in their time, but there have been a couple of interesting but composers whose deaths have actually had a more brutal effect on the work of George Hareling: a longtime feature of the Paris composition department who died in 2005 at age 96.

Hareling was an early adopter of serialism, the atonal music systemized by Arnold Schoenberg and largely created with works like the new music scene (including *Les Femmes d'Alger*). Following a personal crisis, the death of his son — Hareling sought refuge in music, but according to his own statements, he was unable to find ways to deal with his grief through his music and as he began to begin the process of redefining his language. In 1942, his *Les Femmes d'Alger* 2 premiered, featuring the introduction of his wife into his work. In the honor of his academic colleagues, Hareling was chosen to under the understanding that Hareling's career in direction was a stake in the heart of serialism: it wasn't, and the continued to keep in its arsenal of tools. It merely simplified the serialist concept into a composer. But it did not lead to the glorious music and one writing style. That simplification has resulted in the unproductive decision that made our musical world today (Tut and the Ped).

Two recent CDs have again explore the master Hareling work for solo and duo piano. The material is exquisitely wrought and highly varied in dynamic and dramatic effect. There is the beautiful, deeply expressive *Les Femmes d'Alger* Pieces, the thundering *Chorale* and *Les Femmes d'Alger*, and the gently exotic, nearly haunting *Chorale* for two voices. A recent live performance by Mimi Sillman and Coline-Marie Dumas of *Les Femmes d'Alger* for flute and harp, displayed textures so wild that the music seemed purely physical.

Hareling's relations with various styles were also more difficult to categorize. The value of his body of work as a whole now makes that meaning less. More than a composer, it was this man himself is no longer a man to write the appreciation.

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Already, judges have floated the suggestion that art should be marketable.

In the bottom three.

"It's a test of responsibility for your experience of my work," she informed them. I hope she's around for a few weeks. She's far.

The top three works would look fine in any M.F.A. show. Abd's striking, cartoonish portrait of painter Ryan Shultz was singled out by the judges. Another leading contender was Mark Winters' black-and-white photograph of Erik Johnson as a rock-mimicking, brooding blues-type.

The portraitist, Miles, whose obsessive compulsive collection of the fact that he has OCD eventually produced a lyrical, photo-sculpture called "death portrait" of Mac, improvised despite a technical snafu. He turned the win.

The qualities of the remaining contestants, most of whom are established painters, have yet to emerge. Another subtle bias against the oldest artist, Judith Swan, emerged early and rather surprisingly. At 62 in a pack of under-40s, Judith lost the wisdom to be praised when she was excluded by the other women into the only single bedroom.

We will get to know these people better in coming weeks when the challenges will include assembling art from a collection of junk, deconstructing automobiles and working collaboratively (but the show can't automatically catapult the eventual winner into art stardom. It can't guarantee the respect of the art community. And depends on whether Work of Art is perceived as legitimate testing ground or a kitchen debacle

Even educators might be a plus for a winner who knows how to exploit it.

So is Work of Art really a work of art? The show appears to demystify the process of making art, and getting people to enjoy thinking about the field has got to be a good thing.

Already judges have floated the suggestion that successful art (like a successful television show) should clearly communicate something specific or should be marketable. This twofold the potential of art, some of the best art, indeed, is murky and contradictory. The show is not likely to favor artists who are oblique or subtle or conceptual. (Those qualities hurt her of the bottom three this week.)

The structure is ideal for a sensible, facile, clear person: someone who likes to represent people photographically or otherwise. In other words, the kind of artist who would do well in an advertising agency. Entertainment trumps profoundly almost always, but the best entertainment has a core of truth.

by cecilia@citypaper.net

• Work of Art: The Next Great Artist airs Wednesday nights at 10 p.m. on Bravo

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THE WRITING ON THE WALL

Graffiti pioneer Darryl McCray won't let himself get forgotten By Emily Gurnier

Combined is a living legend in our midst, and you're probably never even heard of him. While a 2007 documentary on the artist calls Combined the father of modern graffiti writing, he — and Philadelphia's — role in the genre's development is frequently overlooked in the local hip-hop community. It's a culture that [Philadelphia] started and walked away from," Combined laments. "When I go to New York, I am well-respected, well-accepted, much loved. I don't get it at home in Philadelphia."

Visiting Combined, born Darryl McCray, requires a trip through the outskirts of North Philadelphia, to a block where crumbling two-house families look as if they've barely survived a natural disaster. Areas from the houses are garaged into a neat row and splashed garishly with creative murals. Combined proudly proclaims he was born and raised in Brewertown — though his original tags popped up all over the city. The walls of his modest apartment are lined with framed posters and pictures that celebrate his status among those in the graffiti know. Wearing a yellow shirt bearing his own moniker, Combined amiably invites me to take a seat on his couch and cracks open a fat newspaper overflowing with newspaper clippings, film offers, photographs and e-mails from art collectors.

Admitted to a past that includes numerous arrests and problems with drugs, Combined says he's come full-circle. He's now a youth center who lectures at local universities like Drexel and Temple. He receives occasional recognition — he'll be exhibiting at this weekend's Art + Soul Food Festival in Brewertown, he's busy organizing the Bomber's Festival, a neighborhood cleanup and artist festival set for later this summer; and in 2015, he'll be part of a Smithsonian Institution exhibit on American hip-hop.

Combined began graffiti writing before most better-known NYC graffiti artists were even born, he says. In 1965, Combined, then 11 years old, was sent to a reform school where he picked up his alias. He'd begged the school's cook to serve combined life his grandmother used to make. I during that time, combined we were understandably wary of graffiti, which was typically used to denote gang territories. Combined found a way to circumvent one violent fringe of gang identity. "Gang members used to come to me because I was a poetic writer and I used to write post-its love letters to their girlfriends for them. ... And when I got out [of reform school], I made it my business to go visit every gang I was in [and with] and drink with them and then, And that was my pass to get around the city without getting beat up."

With the freedom to move between gang territories, Combined left his mark throughout entire neighborhoods. "The more people talked about me, he says, admitting to the street song of celebrities, "the more I wrote." Unlike gang members or political activists, Combined simply wanted to garner attention with his large, screaming tags. "It was a phase that I was going through," he says. "I eventually wanted to grow out of it with the media attention you do it." His reformation 1971 newspaper article claiming that a boy nicknamed "Corn," who had been shot dead, was behind the "Combined" tags. "That was a prescription for disaster," says the artist, who remembers feeling even more than ever that he had something to prove. "I knew what I had to do to bring my name back from the dead."

So Combined began creating his name everywhere — all over brick walls, subway cars and police vehicles, in all-ages at the Philadelphia Zoo, even on the Jackson 5's private jet. Having



SAGALONG Darryl "Cornbread" McCray has left his mark everywhere from everyday brick walls to the Jackson 5's private jet.

BRAD HANCOCK

polled off each individual tagging bid, Combined seemed a natural candidate for the graffiti wall of fame, or at least some recognition. Instead, an article published in '71 by *The New York Times* drew the country's attention to the NYC graffiti scene — and an artist called Tito 183. "I am the graffiti writer," says Combined, explaining the difference between himself and those who've garnered some publicity. "The graffiti artist is the one that gets money. A lot of artists are worth more in death than in life."

In a medium contested as simple vandalism, only a handful of artists — such as Jean-Michel Basquiat and Shepard Fairey — have gained professional credibility making graffiti in the U.S., Combined is not among them. (The 1975 film *Cornbread, Earl, and Me* isn't about the artist, nor did the filmmakers ask his permission to use his name.)

In 2007, he was the focus of the feature documentary *Cry of the City Part I: The Legend of Cornbread*. "I thought it was important to tell his story because he's a compelling person," says director Ben McKnight. "Cornbread's tale is the heart of the birth of hip-hop."

But the genre pioneer won't stop there. Combined dreams of the day when a Hollywood movie will do an all-star cast will praise him the recognition he feels he deserves and the attention he has always craved. According to McKnight, 40 years for celebrity is well-earned. "What Combined did in the '60s," he says, "was to bring graffiti into the spotlight so everyone could see it."

(info@nycgraffiti.com)

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ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY 11

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[music picks]

STEPHAN CRUMP'S ROSETTA TRIO

► jazz

Southern accents have borne the brunt of cheap jokes for so long, it's easy to underestimate the intelligence of anyone with a drawl. The same mistake could be made with Memphis-born bassist Stephan Crump's all-star Rosetta Trio, which comes across with such a simple followiness that its serious craft and musicianship could be missed on a casual listen. Crump's chops are more aggressively on display in his role as longtime bassist for pianist Vijay Iyer's stellar trio, and guitarist Liberty Ellman and Jesse Foster have names like Henry Threadgill, Steve Coleman, Dr. John and Joan Baez on their résumés, but as Rosetta the three settle back into porch-swing, sweat-soaked garden. Beneath the homespun intimacy dwells an idiosyncratic sophistication, as they travel made-to-order idiosyncrasy for being ungrounded, and merge each other with an intimacy belied by the apparent relaxation.

—Shawn Brady

Thu., June 19, 9 p.m. \$22, Cleve/Jazz Club, 3023 Seneca St., 215-964-3320, clevejazzclub.com

SALLY SELTMANN

► pop/rock

After two likable albums released under the moniker New Buffalo, Australian multi-instrumentalist Sally Seltmann has shed any vestige of shyism to put out a record under her own name. And why shouldn't she? Songs like "Blissway to My Heartbeat" and "Heart That's Pouring" — on the new *Heart That's Pouring* (Arts & Crafts) — are unabashed pop, all big drums, pretty piano keys and church bells, with Seltmann's confident, feminine voice way up front in the mix. Life is good, if you believe her lyrics — and she's nothing if not persuasive. Any dark clouds are fleeting, as on "Set Me Free," where she asks her husband for just a little breathing room, and the almost too-cheery "On the Borderline," which could get a depressive to pack herself up off the floor and step off into the sunrise.

—M.J. FINE

Fri., June 13, 7 p.m. \$15-\$24, World Cafe Live, 3003 Walnut St., 215-332-3900, worldcafelive.com

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INSPIRING BLUES

▶ jazz

◆ WILSONIAN'S GRAIN



Saxophonist Steve Wilson has gained considerable stage and even more record sales, much easier to misinterpret would be the marquee and album covers that have borne his name. Since he emerged on the scene in the late '80s, Wilson has primarily been one of those first-call players whose time is overwhelmed by answering these calls. Touring last year alone with Blue Note Records' 70th-anniversary reissues and Christian Wallfride's *Inside a Stranger*, Wilson took Green Avenue Records and attempt to remedy this, gathering his friends (including Ontario, Canada-based legends Skopje and Bruce and Bill Stewart), to give back over his own back catalog for some overlooked gems. —*Shawn Brady*

Set: June 12, 12:45 p.m., 820 Ohio Ave. Cbk: 1407
Seeds: 215-681-2131 chicagojazz.com

▶ experimental/jazz trio

◆ EVANS-WALTER-BLANCARTE



When Walter's hyperaggressive jazz-noise-metal drumming has lain waste to several midsize jazz over the past 20 years — Chicago throughout the '80s and the Bay Area more recently (but in late 2009 he relocated to the biggest adversary of them all) and now broke down to Philly with a pair of his new live-in-ones, Peter Evans (jazz/noise) and Roscoe Mitchell (through jazz and later more abstract realm), white-based Roscoe Blancarte seems to employ improvisation when metal isn't quite extreme enough. Expect the sort of nuclear that Powell House hasn't heard about the Revolution. —*Shawn Brady*

Set: June 12, 8 p.m., 820 Ohio Ave. Cbk: 294-5
Trk: 215-681-2131

▶ rockabilly/blues

◆ IMELDA MAY

As a swingin' '60s rockabilly act, Kelly (Stacy & Lemie) weren't enough, here's further evidence that non-Americans need it in our nostalgia with greater vigor than we could probably realize ourselves — at least when it comes to 1950s rockabilly and jump-blues. Dublin's Imelda May (who's rarely stopped performing under her maiden name, Cobby), taps on Irish bodhran while she sings, which doesn't entirely scream vintage (as it often does) but her voice gets the vibe over it, from her leaping-great warble and tightly coiled two-tone can't-let-voice-quarry-as-it-gets-at-home! Manda Jackson live-ups and smothering Jessica Rabbit croons. —*Ken Radwin*

Set: June 10, 8 p.m., 812 W. Belmont St. The Junctions
Seeds: 1-800-444-4444 www.junctions.com

▶ country/pop

◆ ALLISON MOORER



There's less rock 'n' roll than there used to be in new sound Allison Moorer's new rock, but she doesn't shake the blues and soul out of her voice like it had. Her soft and lovely *Cherry* (Jive) still comes out in February, two months before *Travis* (Jive) comes out. And if you like Moorer, you'll like *Travis* as well. —*Ken Radwin*

Set: June 11, 7:30 p.m., 825-837 W. Belmont St. World
Trk: 215-681-2131 www.worldjazz.com

▶ blues/rock

◆ MOUNT CARMEL

Columbus, Ohio trio Mount Carmel is a blues-rock trio that makes blues rock live and the blues rock live side project of some twenty bluesheads getting in touch with the '60s. Mount Carmel sound like the best of the best. Mount Carmel sound like the best of the best. Mount Carmel sound like the best of the best. —*Ken Radwin*

Set: June 14, 8 p.m., 85 W. Belmont St. Mount Carmel
Trk: 215-681-2131 www.mountcarmel.com

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> CAUGHT IN A BARD ROMANCE

When *Pennsylvania Ballet* last presented *Romeo and Juliet* in 2005, the leading roles were performed by Zachary Branch and Julie Duna. During the run, Branch used his curtain call to drop to his knee and place an engagement ring on the finger of a surprised but thrilled Duna. Five years later, the married couple are back to those familiar roles.

Choreographer John Cranko's vision of story ballet lets dance truly tell the tale. PAH's opening-night performance of *Romeo and Juliet* was no rival, you could practically hear Shakespeare's words as the performers acted out sword fights, ballroom dancing and marketplace frolics. The great Prokofiev score, with its wailing discordant undercurrent, hints at tragedy even in joyful scenes.

At this point, Branch and Duna own their roles. They bring the full confidence and bliss of their own personal relationship—not to mention the significant talents—to this tragic love story. Duna became virtually boneless, bending backward in her partner's embrace. Branch replied physically with lusty, powerful leaps and turns.

Beggs Tansley was outrageously elegant as Tybalt, in command of the stage whenever he was on it. Jonathan Billis and Andrei Vynograd gloried as Romeo's light-hearted buddies, Mercutio and Benvolio, respectively. Gabriel a Yadenich turned her role as Juliet's nurse into a fine example of dance acting, while Amy Aldridge transformed her costume as Lady Capulet into



a small piece of stage perfection. Janet Anderson's sublime flexibility suited his jester, while as house stage manager Tony Costantino once again very nicely portrayed Lord Montague.

This is not some old chamber about wrens or dolls that rose to life. Once the curtain rises, the storyline unfolds in a clear, easily understood manner. Creating graceful transitions, dancers enter and exit from a single, stunningly lit set of arches that begins as a marketplace and eventually morph into Juliet and Romeo's final resting place. It's beautiful melancholy, just as Shakespeare intended. Through June 12, 824-8129, *Academy of Music*, 1420 Locust St., 215-680-1889, paballet.org

—Janet Anderson

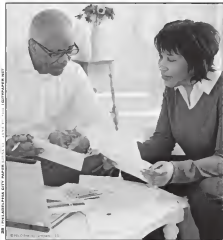
> opera

+ ORPHÉE ET EURYOICE

The Opéra Company of Philadelphia closes its season with a production so strikingly designed to smash the notion of opera as a bunch of fat and people standing around singing on a stage so far away that you need binoculars to see them. DCP will stage a new production of Gluck's dreamy masterpiece *Orphée et Eurydice* in the Kimmel's Intimate Performance Theater. Orphée is a parts role—that is, a male character sung by a female singer (in this case, Alexandra Donato)—and her lover will be sung by soprano Marianne McKay. The fictitious pair collectively define the strangest of things of opera singers. The production also features a sleek, bold design courtesy of New York artist Philippe Arnaud. Never been to an opera before? This would be good one to try. Oh, and it's only a hour and a half long. If you like it, by adding the three-hour *Orphée et Eurydice* on top for the full.

—Peter Bernstein

June 17-18, 840-6130, Kimmel Center, 300 S. Broad St., 215-680-1018, operalive.org



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➤ DON'T CALL IT A COVERAGE

If you think there are no second acts in American lives, *Sunday in the Park with George* will change your mind. This 1998 show follows one of the greatest professional dancers in Stephen Sondheim's career — Merely We Will Avenge, a Broadway fiasco that almost ended his collaboration with director Harold Prince. Merely might have finished off as a lesser artist. For Sondheim, it opened another collaboration, and a musical that takes on nothing less than the need to create art — whatever the cost. *Sunday* is more than a great comeback. It's one of the wonders of modern theater.

In Act 1, the famous point-blank painter Georges Seurat finishes his masterpiece, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, as his childhood friend, the poet of a love affair with his mistress, Dot, the jeering receptionist of his village and the critical establishment — name of it will stand in his way. Act 2 brings us to a contemporary museum and a new artist named George (this one is fictional), who naturally agrees when Seurat can't die — commercial success — but as with his namesake, success seems not of French

Sunday is a dazzling piece of work that's intellectually rigorous, deeply touching and full of glorious melody. Especially delightful is the clever interweaving of the two stories (where the same actors take on multiple roles), as well as the opportunity to use the artworks, some to life.

There's a lot to admire in the **Arden Theatre Co.**'s visually elegant production, which uses video to revitalize the art. Jeff Donn (the Gloucester) delivers an excellent performance at his considerable



test dramatically and vocally in the show's cathartic final scenes. Elsewhere, the passion and dark introspection of Segal's character don't fully register. Kravitz Paschke (Dot-Marie) sings superbly but misses some of the charm. The ensemble performers (especially Maroon, Wormy, Ward) are excellent, and director Terry Nolen, as a musical director, Kirk Elbing, is to be praised for re-creating the original's cheerfulness, and keeping a well-friction to a minimum.

Most of all, there's *Sanddy* stuff, a show to see and treasure again and again. Design. Composition. Balance. Light. Thank you, Mr. Seadream. Through July 4, 834-2448, Arden Theatre Co., 40 N. Second St. 215-823-1122, ardentheatre.com

—David Anthony Shaw

► chicf.com/city

+ DAYDREAM NATION

For its inaugural Contemporary Photography Competition, Kensington's Philadelphia Photo Arts Center features an album slide from Sonja Nothardt as a nod from the Gerhard Richter painting adorning its cover. Images in "Daydream Nation" show industrial, dystopian and provocative. David Saxe frames the gridlike pattern of a large studio window. The microcosm of a mass anonymous factory towering over a harbor (not beyond the twisted glass). We see black-clad-up women and instant kiosk in a place by Samia de Corral. But it's not clear whether they're lying in love or exhaustion. And George Arndt's complex, reverse portrait of a man exhaling cigarette smoke in front of a Santa Cruz decoration is as unsettling now as when it happened in the 2009 Los Angeles art exhibition at Gallery 333.

—John Williams

Spring reception: Fri., June 18 6-8 p.m., free;
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photoarts.org

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ABOUT DAMN TIME

ON JUNE 2—just three days after BP's "top kill" maneuver to stem the massive oil leak caused by the April 20 explosion of its Deepwater Horizon rig failed, and one day after the Justice Department announced it was opening criminal and civil investigations against the company—President Barack Obama finally spoke the unpleasant truth underlying this calamity in the Gulf of Mexico. During a collective 40-minute speech in Pittsburgh, he told the assembled crowd of small-business owners, "We have to acknowledge that there are inherent risks to drilling for oil beneath the surface of the Earth, and these are risks that are bound to increase the harder oil extraction becomes. We also have to acknowledge that no America can rely solely on fossil fuels should not be the victim we have for our children and our grandchildren."

There is a good bit of rhetoric here, and it's not wholly unlike the rhetoric we saw on the campaign trail two years ago. As another campaign season approaches, Obama knows as well as anyone that the longer this act is played out, and the more his administration is seen as inept, his poll numbers will suffer. And, to be sure, if that's one thing this president is undeniably good at, it's rhetoric.

So, his speech in Pittsburgh was, through this prism, the opening pitch of the White House's political season. But his diagnosis of the reality in southeastern corner that it needs to be seized into our collective consciousness: The age of oil must end.

This is no surprise. It's also our chance to get it right. In the end, it won't matter how angry the president is, or how angry the media is that he's not angry enough. It won't matter which congressman whip themselves into a righteous lather of indignation, or what blue-ribbon oil spill-gang show swings blame where, or how pious the eventual purlimons are.

What will matter is whether we seize this opportunity for change or let the status quo pull us back into the oil-drenched mire.

Last year, the House of Representatives passed by a razor-thin margin an ambitious energy bill that included a controversial "cap and trade" provision, which would cap the amount of pollutants that companies can dump into the atmosphere over time. That bill, even stripped of that provision, has languished in the Senate. The White

House has, for much of the last year, focused elsewhere.

But finally, with the BP oil spill as a backdrop, the president has made his case. As long last,

"The time has come to aggressively consider that transition from fossil fuels." That means, in short, eliminating tax breaks for Big Oil, using that money to invest in clean energies and instituting a region carbon pollution.

The energy industry basically owned the Bush White House. The latter's 2005 energy bill granted the former some \$14.5 billion in tax cuts and reduced royalty payments, and asked for offshore drilling—like in the Gulf of Mexico. It revealed granted Big Oil \$50 million a year in research money. According to the Congressional Budget, taxpayer subsidies to energy conglomerates in the time of between \$15 billion and \$50 billion every year, thank you very much.

In 2008, the General Accounting Office found that, of 104 parades worldwide, only 11 received a smaller portion of oil revenue than the U.S. In other words, we're getting screwed, and screwed,

the naked city

land—but we're caught in a screwing

Last year Obama asked Congress to remove \$31 billion in tax breaks for Big Energy. Congress didn't oblige. Of course, that industry PACS shivered on cordons, and the \$175 million Big Oil spent last year on federal lobbying. But it had some tools with our lack of moral fiber and our willingness to dodge through choices—capping carbon pollution will increase energy bills in the short term, especially until newer cleaner alternatives become more viable. No way around that.

Yet, these things need doing. If they don't happen, it's because we've chosen to shirk the necessary sacrifices.

In the year's budget request, the administration asked Congress to end \$38.8 billion in tax breaks for oil and gas companies. The BP calamity isn't the end of the road, the upcoming fight won't be easy. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid says he "I guess the energy bill this summer, but that will be a uphill climb."

If it fails, we'll have only ourselves to blame.

(Jeffrey Berman writes for ctpaper.net)

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how years ago. Jamie Moffitt, a budding documentary filmmaker, bought a small, two-story house on East Westmoreland Avenue, just a block off Allegheny in Philadelphia's long-blighted West Kensington neighborhood, for \$50,000, to use as a studio.

Even before he moved in, Moffitt discovered a problem—the house next door it was vacant and abandoned, a prime spot for drug dealers and a haven for drug users.

"Out in front, people would use the porch to deal

drugs, and then in back you could see people go in and out of the back door and climb through the back window," he says. "They'd either squat there or use drugs. I assume it was an abandoned place."

Abandoned properties and crime go hand in hand in Kensington—West Kensington, in particular—locate one of the highest rates of violent property in the city and, not coincidentally, some of the highest rates of drug use, violent crime and murder.

So, Moffitt figured it was in his interest to buy the house and fix it up himself. Besides, how much could it possibly cost?

The house belonged to a company called Landvest LLC, which had purchased it for \$8,500 in 1998, and was located right down the street from him on Allegheny Avenue. He called to inquire about the property, but Landvest owner Robert N. Coyle Sr. seemed uninterested. "He pretty much just threw out some number like, 'Give me 40,000 and I'll sell you the house or not.' I thought it was totally nuts," Moffitt says.

The average price for a decent house in that neighborhood is about \$40,000. Perplexed, Moffitt began asking around about Coyle to neighbors and a friend who worked for a nearby community development corporation. The Landvest proprietor, he was told, had a reputation as a problem landlord and who owned a small empire of properties in Kensington, many of them vacant or in disrepair. There were rumors that Coyle was under investigation, and that Coyle's office had been raided by the District Attorney's Office. Both of those rumors are true.

Last October, *Daily News* reporters Barbara Luker and Wendy Ruckenstein—recent recipients of the Pulitzer Prize—broke the story of Robert Coyle, whom they dubbed Kensington's "shackled millionaire." They revealed that Coyle was under federal and state investigation—sources tell *City Paper* that a grand jury had been empowered, though it is unclear whether it is state or federal—and detailed Coyle's many alleged malfeasances: He ignored his rental properties' horrendous conditions, failed to pay taxes and utility bills, talking tenants that water was included in their rent only to let them find out it wasn't when their water was turned off, submitted bogus city rental bonds during evictions proceedings, and, perhaps most egregiously, told some tenants they were signing "rent to own" agreements that would give them possession of their houses after they paid rent for a specified (and usually staggeringly short) period of time.

Coyle, the *Daily News* reported, had also defrauded an million of dollars in loans, leaving hundreds of renters—virtually a small neighborhood's worth of tenants—facing eviction even if they'd paid their rent on time. Right months later, no one's sure what will happen to them.

Meanwhile, Coyle's rise and fall raises vexing questions, both for the future of Kensington and other neighborhoods ravaged by shakeups: How could the institutions that were supposed to protect the public have failed so miserably? And most importantly, could this happen again?

A *City Paper* investigation reveals that it could. And it will. And it is.

PHOTOS BY NEAL SANTOS



NEIGHBORHOOD HOODS
ON THE MAP:
Kensington has
some of the city's
highest rates of
vacant houses,
and two which
clearly earned
the highest rates
of violent crime
and evictions
citywide.
A general
overview sketch
of Coyle's portfolio
of properties.

Coyle operated with impunity for so long because the institutions that were supposed to act as safeguards instead greased the wheels on Coyle's finger. Banks had conflicting interests that motivated them to turn a blind eye to Coyle's design; the city's landlord-tenant court is predisposed toward landlords; and the city lacks a system to check landlord abuse. Since the *Daily News* report, none of this has changed.

In fact, some of the players who contributed to and benefited from Coyle's operations are still active in Kensington.

Coyle's whereabouts, activities and assets are something of a mystery these days—since the *Daily News* story, he has lived largely in the shadows and *City Paper* was unable to reach him for comment. But he left behind a long trail of public records—deeds, mortgages and lawsuits—which tell the story of the man, and full, of his empire.

For decades, Coyle, now in his mid-60s, was a well-known Kensington realtor who sold real estate with at least one alias name, Robert Jr., and, on one case or another, employed many of the neighborhood's planners and tradesmen to work on his properties. His early companies, Robert N. Coyle & Sons Real Estate Inc. and Apple Development Corp., operated almost exclusively in Kensington and southwestern Fort Mifflin throughout the 1990s and 2000s. They often bought properties from those leaving the neighborhood and sold or rented them to newcomers.

It was, demographically speaking, a brilliant business model. White, middle-class families who had been sustained for generations by factory jobs were leaving in droves, low- and middle-income Hispanics who needed affordable housing were moving in. Coyle bought houses from McBratley, Stone and Myerson and sold them to

*** continued on page 18

HOW COULD THE INSTITUTIONS THAT WERE SUPPOSED TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HAVE FAILED SO MISERABLY?

DEFAULT LINES

Philadelphia, Cohen and Logans

For much of this career, these transactions were straightforward. Coyle bought for less and sold, or rented, for more.

But in the mid-'90s, his business model began to change in a profound way. The change coincided with the rise of the housing bubble, as banks came to see property not as actual houses with actual people paying actual mortgages, but as abstract commodities to be shored and sold — commodities that, the thinking went, could only increase in value.

In 1994, Coyle began taking out second mortgages on his properties and using them as collateral for cash loans. He began building his properties. He took out a mortgage on five properties from Fidelity Federal Savings and Loan in August 1996, a mortgage on nine houses from First Executive Bank in January 1997, a mortgage on 17 more houses from Republic First two weeks later. And even as Apple Development began to rack up debt, another newly formed Coyle company — Larchmont LLP — bought up more properties as quickly as it could, and took out large mortgages on those, too.

Coyle was, in economic terms, "highly leveraged." Yet the banks with which Coyle dealt were willing to grant him more and ever-bigger loans.

The lender contacted for this story — East River Bank, Pennsylvania Business Bank (now NBTUS), Eastshore Bank and Republic First — declined to comment, but there are a few likely explanations why. For starters, Coyle didn't appear to be a bad debtor. He made regular enough payments on his mortgages to satisfy the banks. And as he took out new loans, Coyle was careful to satisfy previous mortgages.

On paper, Coyle was a model investor so long as he had enough money paying for it, he could buy more properties that he then mortgaged for more cash to pay the mortgages on his other properties. And as long as the checks cleared, the banks didn't seem to care about details of Coyle's financial dealings.

After all, they were making money, too.

Among Coyle's transactions with the banks, one stands out: a \$4.4 million second mortgage he took out in June 2007 with the Philadelphia-based Republic First against more than 160 properties — at the time, almost certainly the largest of all his mass mortgages to date — and one of at least four mass mortgages on which he would later default.

Why Republic First handed over so much money to Coyle isn't clear. Some parties note the debt attached to many of these houses in the form of tax liens and unpaid utilities, the bank offered Coyle about \$50,000 per house in a neighborhood where houses often sell for considerably less.

Most experts contacted for this story check it up to the housing bubble, the Daily News scribbled the lender's document to the "trust" they had as Coyle.

Both explanations are probably true, but they don't tell the whole story. On Nov. 14, 2008, after it became clear that Coyle had defaulted on his \$4.4 million loan, Republic First sued, seeking to enforce a "condition of payment" clause in its mortgage that would allow the bank to immediately auction those properties at sheriff's sale.

In December, Coyle submitted an affidavit to the Court of Common Pleas, offering his own version of the transaction gone bad. In it, Republic First is anything but a naive victim.

COYLE WAS "HIGHLY LEVERAGED," YET BANKS WERE WILLING TO GRANT HIM MORE AND EVER-BIGGER LOANS.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS FOR ENR. This is one of the many properties that Coyle bought for less and sold, or rented, for more.

According to Coyle, he and the bank were in talks over a large mortgage deal when Republic First "requested that [I] take on additional properties" — properties that belonged to Robert Coyle Jr., his son, under various company names — "which had existing debt in excess of \$2 million" — at a price higher than their true value so Republic First would not have to take a write-off.

In exchange for taking his son's bad debt off the bank's books — records show that in 2006, Republic First sued Coyle Jr. for \$2.3 million — Coyle alleges, the bank agreed to steer title insurance business to Coyle's company, National Abstract Savings, to the tune of \$30,000 per month. Moreover, Coyle says that Republic First intentionally inflated the value of his houses to make them seem worthier of the loans.

It's worth noting that Coyle, the man making these claims, is under investigation for fraud and living well

by the very bank against which he is bringing charges. That said, e-mails between Coyle and bank officials submitted with the affidavit support at least parts of his story.

In a November 2007 e-mail, for example, Coyle's accountant asks about "the title business promised before and after the [June 26, 2007] closing." Then President and Chief Operating Officer Louis DeCours, who has since left the company, responds: "We have been very slow in new loan closings, but I think things will pick up soon." DeCours adds: "I thought a good next step would be to have you and [Coyle's accountant] meet with me to make new work starts coming your way."

In January 2008, in response to an e-mail from Coyle, Republic First Assistant Vice President Roman Daglier writes, "I am doing everything in my power to get you title work."

At the time, Republic First was

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the bell curve
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- [5] ATW owners criticize child-drinking ban at Sunday's Phillies game. And the privates: Is it still a hot item? **Hot item**
- [1] City Council accuses the Redevelopment Authority of not obtaining proper Council approval before moving forward on deals. "Well, pardon us for thinking we had 'you know, redevelopment authority'."
- [+2] Gov Ed Rendell cancels a \$30,000 taxpayer-funded PPA project for himself, saying he "will not spend one dime of the taxpayer's money on the assemblage of things that are for legacy purposes." Adding: "And you can hold me to that. In fact, my very statement in the newspaper is that I am going to hold me to that."
- [+1] Mayor Nutter hires Cate C. Wolfgang to be Philly's first chief service officer, whose job it is to recruit volunteers to help with various city programs. Her first task: To persuade herself to do the work for free.
- [0] "I haven't seen someone use one of those in a long time," police spokesman Lt. Frank Varano inspects a FOP courtesy car, which carries flash lights in hopes of avoiding tickets. Adding: "Cough, cough."

PHOTOGRAPHY

- [+3] Carson O'Brien wants a Popsigny at a lower theater show. He asked exactly like Chris Fringer's costume.
- [+1] Tony Danza prepares for his speech at Northwood High's graduation ceremony "Class of 2013." I saw you at the school since give Samanta and Jennifer. The rights are long out you are your very own tonight's in front of the crowd. A brand new we around the band."
- [+4] Urban Outfitters begins selling a candlestick T-shirt that reads "Tall Linn." And another that says "Wear Cap."
- [0] Union leader John Gougherty became the Democratic ward leader of the 1st District. And then he went, because there was no more worlds to conquer.
- [0] The state legislature considers raising the gas tax to avoid a budget crisis. "Good luck with that," says Nutter. "Just got my balls twisted to me in my non-degradable bottle by Wagon."

the naked city



AMILLIONSTORIES

How many adorable than ever

Evil has a way of going hand-in-hand with genius. Lurie, you'll recall from Sunday School, won the **Morning Star**, not the **Dun South**. **George W. Bush** was drunk as a brick, sure, but he had **Dick Cheney**. See how that works?

In Philadelphia, there's **Michael Meshaan**. He's the longtime head of the Republican City Committee and controls 500 or so jobs at the **Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA)**—yes the dude owns a home elected by voters. Instead, he's the "legal counsel" for the Philly GOP. And despite the fact that Meshaan's shakedown position makes it tough impossible to meet him, Republican insurgents keep trying to get to him.

By the time this paper hits the streets, though, the **insurgents will have lost**. Wednesday night marks the election of citywide Republican leaders by ward leaders, and Meshaan's cronies will undoubtedly win. Then they'll decide to keep him as "legal counsel."

Why? Because Meshaan is a **g-damn genius**, that's why.

Let's review how he **took down** the Republican insurgents—on the Legal Opposition, **Al Schmitt**, a few Tea Partiers and other full-on conservatives—one by one, one by one.

The insurgents' plan went like this: Get their peers elected as Republican committee people, whose job it is to **elect ward leaders**, who, in turn, elect citywide leadership. Once in power, kick Meshaan and Go. The strategy might be genius, if only it weren't so. **un-evil**

In response to the insurgents, Meshaan filed 44 **hate petitions** in March challenging candidates for Republican committee positions—follow in **his very own party**. Matthew Wells, of the insurgency found that some of the "challengers" Meshaan put up were Democrats, some had never heard of Meshaan and one was **just plain dead**. Meshaan chalked it up to mistakes by ward leaders. Shortly thereafter, the **Register** reported that the PPA was "running away on Meshaan's behalf" during the primary election,

dismissing signatures, notices and candidates to run. A **whole government agency** behind Meshaan, and the insurgents still thought they had a chance. Adorable, right?

Meshaan wasn't done yet. Right before the election, the Republican City Committee voted to **change its bylaws**, so that ward leaders could run for committee positions had to get **10 votes**, instead of only one. Schmitt told the **Daily News** that only seven of the 120 ward leaders had 10 or more votes—if the insurgents were scored before, they were **pretty much ruled out**. And then's more: City commissioners recently announced that they would accept certificates of election to the Republican City Committee, instead of the winner in their-

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS

[is as slippery as k-y jelly]



AMILLIONSTORIES

activist. Instagram feared that this would keep committee people who were rightfully elected—but not **friends with the right people**—from finding out that they had **was**. Then, last week, as we reported on the Clog city containment, we suddenly reversed their decision, perhaps because **Wolfe was threatening to sue**.

For Mehan, it was a minor setback. See, in February, the Republican City Commission voted to give the majority of the ward leaders' voting power to those who resided in the Northeast—**Meehan's most loyal supporters**. In other words, the incumbent's battle was lost from the beginning. **Grovis**.

HOW EVIL IS TOM CORBETT?

Speaking of **evil Tom Corbett**, the attorney general's GOP gubernatorial opponent, some a/c on this week's **A Million Stories**: **How Evil Is Tom Corbett?** **Burrowsville**, which goes from zero to 10, about 25 for so far the reader numbers. Not bad.

This week's **HETCOWS** finds Corbett filing a "friend of the court" brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in support of **John R. Snyder**, a York County driver who is suing the **Western Baptist Church** for, these constantly denouncing self-proclaimed observers **"God Hates Fags"** signs at military funerals. At first glance, this seems accurate, like maybe **Corbett doesn't hate fags**—even

though he doesn't think they should get married, because **God hates anal**.

But there's a fallacy with this line of thinking: The slope of ascending free speech is to **slippery as k-y jelly**; after all, the First Amendment isn't about protecting popular speech. Additionally, with the cue to the military—and the fact that his AG's office press-released it—Corbett's move is **transparently political**. **Shh**.

A3 on the **HETCOWS** parts Corbett will before **Michael Mehan**, whose sword he'll snag the **HETCOWS**' needle in half upon telling his mother a whole lot about **his new pudding**.

DEPT. OF BARBARIC PRACTICES

Harold Wilson can't catch a break. First, he was convicted of a **triple murder** in South Philly that he didn't commit—double in part to the DA's office's ridiculously **racist jury selection practices**—and sentenced to death, then held in prison across the state for **16 years** before DNA evidence cleared him in 2005 [News, "The Exonerated," AP Press, Sept. 14, 2006].

And then on Friday, a city official told Wilson, 51, he couldn't leave his prison parked in front of the **District Attorney's Office**.

Wilson and **16 other exonerates** from across the country had gathered outside the DA's on South Penn Square as members of **Witness to Innocence**, an anti-death penalty group. Though the South is far-and-away the most **anti-injection-happy** region of the U.S.—1,990 executions out of 1,212 in the country were 1976, according to the Death Penalty Information Center—Wilson to Innocence decided to petition of our brotherly love, **agony**, to try to dissuade **DA Seth Williams** from doing out the ultimate punishment.

True, we've only executed three people in the last 34 years, and none in the last decade. Also true, we've had a death row woman in place for years, because on Pennsylvania's facts, **William**, have **been cleared after being sentenced to die**. On the other hand, the commonwealth still has **more than 220 souls** awaiting their date with the guillotine—more than all but a handful of states. And, moreover, on **Williams** has signed off on a **complex death penalty prosecutions** more taking office in January.

"[Williams] has been outspoken about reforming the criminal justice system in general and in the death penalty in particular," says **Witness to Innocence** executive director **Kurt Rosenberg**. "He just won't have to deliver what he said he would do—which is implementing a more **humane capital sentencing system**."

Ideally, they'd like him to take the death penalty off the table, but that's not happening. So, they'd write for **Williams** seeking capital punishment has frequently then predecessor **Lynne Abraham**, because—and they have a point here—**death is forever**.

Take **Seth Millsap**, whose district attorney in Berks County, Texas, in the 1970s, secured the death penalty for **Ruben Cantu**, who was executed in 1992. In 2005, a **Berks County** investigation cast doubt on the veracity of Cantu's guilt and, Millsap says, brought him in on a **paraphrase**.

"My clients reviewed what any prosecutor in the country would consider to be the **perfect trial**," Millsap told the "crowd" by which we mean "a handful of reporters." And yet, he was convicted because the jury did what we asked the jury to do: **And so the system worked**—but it's not exactly clear that it did.



man overboard!

By Isaac Thompson

SPILL, BABY, SPILL

BP CURRENTLY OPERATES 150 on-shore wells worldwide. In the next five years BP plans to increase the number of operated on-shore wells to 200.

They're from 100 Wells Active and Beyond A World-Class Company for World-Class Projects, released by BP circa 2004. How big a spill the company is drilling fountains has never seemed like that. And how big it looks now. Sometime it took me a few weeks to realize that the so-called world environmental disaster is a real history lesson just a statistical tip, a predictable unpredictability applied the number of wells operating today and the newness of this technology. The only thing remarkable about Deepwater Horizon is that it happened to blow up. And if another blowout proves later, or another well causing a study and another well's safety savings? That's beauty.

"Without fracking, America's continental groundwater. Our top contributor remains producing these resources in an environmentally world-class way."

That's what the letter titled "Tracking" is about. That's the **Leaky Well** by **Gregory**. That's **Kelly** 2. **Kelly**, president of the **Marcellus Shale Coalition**, an anti-group that lobbies for oil. The letter requested **Friday** morning. Later today a **Marcellus Shale** well in **Clarke County** exploded, spewing from 35,000 to 1 million gallons of toxic fracking fluid for 18 hours. The well's owner, **EOG**, is investigating—can it be?—the blowout preventer not working. Another young technology goes horribly awry and yet again, it already sounds as if **EOG** operates 117 wells in the **Marcellus Shale**—at least one of which contaminated a different patch of forest in **Clarke County** in August 2008, when it leaked drilling fluids into **Forest Spring**. Some 2,000 new wells are on track to be permitted this year alone. The upshot being that this particular well? It happened to blow up, too. So do another one, on **Monday** in **West Virginia**. There, a **Marcellus Shale** well met out on a 70-foot tower of flame, burning for weeks.

So there's more your paper can do. Call for a list for a **Marcellus Shale** well's safety? Newer wells within a better blowout record joining any other good, but including a well's safety and some way to be sure—**but**/have players?

I just happened to get that, a few minutes ago, by e-mail, from a stranger.



"They Don't," as if Power's incessantly ornate work, including her songwriting collection "Various Males of Distinction" will be a packed night of poetry readings by Luce and Gendron and Live/Debuting: **Thu, June 20, 7pm, PMBE, Green Lane Club, 6020 General St., 215-222-5432.**

✓ SPOOKY LITERARY SALON
Slaughter Field's speakers are invited to write and listen to but under the other original and classic work. Doors open at 7pm, event starts at 8pm, space early for listening. **Free/Thu, June 20, 8-10pm, 215-222-5432.**

✓ SHELLEY JACOBSON & JIM KENNEDY
An evening of music and poetry. Jacobson will perform a new song "Bumpin' Around" and Kennedy will perform a new song "Bumpin' Around" and Kennedy will perform a new song "Bumpin' Around". **Thu, June 20, 8-10pm, 215-222-5432.**

✓ PHANTASMA POETRY
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✓ ROBERT MCGREW
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portion control
By Drew Lazar

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> **IN THIS CITY** of neighborhoods, everyone's got that one place. It's the place to your house you could ping-pong a front door with a pebble, but you rarely ever visit. It might be due to a bad experience. Or loyalty to a competitor. Or it could be something as mundane as hours of operation. Many times, there's just no responsible explanation — you just don't go.

For me, resident of Graduate Hospital, that place has been La Va. I can count my past visits on one hand. The La-Columbia's great, the staff is friendly, the coaches are cozy and the ball windows make for primo people-watching — and yet I've never made a habit out of stopping in.

After eating through a heap of co-workers' Vicar's offerings, that's getting to change. The salad's nice. Umm, diets with the coffee, but the extra one bit. And what else? They're, I'm not sure I've had more flavorful Israeli food, priced in this market [everything's under \$12], in Philly.

Start with the salad. It's bright, biting tomato stew whose sleekly tossed by sunny eggs. Their yolk gradually hardening into diaphanous fanks that resemble amber bubbles. Item after, could be mistaken for a Turkish salad, but after your first chop through the gloopy crust leaves you this covered in glistening strands. It's clear these matched potato-stuffed omelets would score five if brought within 500 yards of yellow mustard.

The chicken schnitzel platter seems juicy, lightly breaded breast-meat patties, drizzled with the nutty crust of sesame, over rice. With simple slices of cucumber salad and hummus. That latter dip is something new. Its creamy chingy glaze the appetizer result of an ancient process involving the oil of an egg and bread butter.

The most interesting dish on La Va's menu is available just once a week — Jackson, a Lebanese Sabich specialty. Umm, give up eating it. Sabich, a sweet brown dough on eggplant, baked slow and low in an oil-greasy meat pot for up to half a day. It comes out rosy-brown, like a ring-out wicket, with griddled tomato and chingy, oil-soaking tomatoes. Not this plate. Umm, Umm, could be mistaken for Saturday without it. A couple more visits to my new neighborhood haunt, and I may start being the same guy.

/drew.lazar@citypaper.org

HOOF + FIN Beef short ribs over four types of summer squash. Hoof + Fin's version lightens things up with a fennel braise and fruit toppings.

PHOTO: SHANTON



[review]

ANIMAL HOUSE

Hoof + Fin, from head to toe, has the capacity to charm. By Trey Popp

HOOF + FIN | 617 S. Third St., 212 285-2070. Open for dinner from Mon., Wed. Thru., 5:30–10 p.m.; Fri. Sat. 5:30–11 p.m.; brunch Sat. Sun., 11 a.m.–3 p.m.; closed Tue. Appetizers and salads, \$7–\$13, main dishes \$13–\$19, pasta and soups, \$11–\$19, entrees, \$20–\$25, grilled fish, \$20–\$25. BYOB. www.hoofandfin.com

A p and in Paris has nothing on May in Queen Village. Argue if you feel like it, but that will only mark your misfortune of having missed out on Hoof + Fin's gusto in late spring. Was there a better time in town than one beneath the low-wattage light bulbs strung up behind this once-missing Argentine in BYOB, where the boughs of a Japanese maple over the whir of an old air conditioner that sounds like field crickets in courtship season?

With weather that rewarded short sleeves but didn't permit so long ones, the crowd was as pleasantly mismatched as the tables. A white-haired burlesque in clothes fit for the opera paid at quarter till 8, nibbled past an indoor night top where three children wriggled on their knees and in high chairs, then crossed petals at the door with a hap twentysomething whose dress I'd overheard that could have been mistaken for a tatter-alt rock

rock from sold to home. The former Gayle again has been recycled into a spot that welcomes all comers.

Hoof + Fin's title-floor interior is as loud as a boom boom in a storage closet, with or without kids in the room. Yet anyone who swapped a table outside could hardly complain — even when a pore of service that pushed dinner into a third hour before dessert. In its humble, unadorned way, it was the perfect setting at the perfect time.

But if you missed the moment, not all is lost, because summer figures to flutter Lucas Montano's concept more thoroughly than April. The Argentine restaurant has ventured into Philadelphia's front bay house base down the shore — he owns Quake's and is former owner of Sea Salt, both in Stone Harbor, N.J., and heads the kitchen operations at Cape Resorts Group.

Those spots are no doubt eager for high season to hit, and Hoof + Fin was championing at the same but in May. The grill is its center of gravity, there's a raw bar to go along with it, and chef Carlos Berro couldn't wait to round out entrée with sliced tuna steaks and caviar on the rob — as he didn't, even though those pleasures are a while yet to expire.

He hadn't stopped over-aging entirely. There was a lovely mid-light risotto smothered with fennel beans and asparagus, with shaved green potatoes to lend a waxy edge. Asparagus was even better off the grill, slicked with a silky brown veal raguette and centered with more fennel. (Whether a damn spears under a poached egg rated 5/5 is another question.)

PHOTO: SHANTON



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If you're on a first date, giving up the first bite should get you to first base faster than Chase Utley facing a 3-0 count.

A best salad would have been more aptly named after the long stalks of watermelon that dwarfed the sweet cubes of Cheddar-orange and cranberry hiding at the bottom of a mortal musing bowl, but for the most part the menu delivered just what it advertised. Pork cutaneous, a flank cut that's common in Argentina, came off the grill lean and full-flavored outside a dipping egg of straight-ahead cheddar. A whole brownie rode out to the table in nothing faster than its fire-blistered skin. There are good accompaniments: spiced beef, or peppered corn.

Beynon takes the occasional creative departure from the straight-forward fare. Red grapefruit and chocolate set off every slice of fudge cascading in a raw-bar appetizer that was halfway between cowpat and fatuous salacious. I could have done without the heavy clank of truffle essence that almost suffocated the bright flavors beneath, however. Beynon's braised short ribs were topped with an unexpectedly blent surprise: chunks of pineapple and marmalade, with a raspberry oil to the side. The meat was terrific, and though not everyone wants a fruit cocktail on top of braised beef, it brought a cold-weather dish into the flavor spectrum of summer well enough to recommend ordering it in mid-July. I'd go back for it.

Execution is not as consistent as it should be at press that break against the upper limit for a casual neighborhood spot. The \$25 appetizer in the Galleys was overcooked and unevenly cooked — muscles and darts, just fine, shrimp, rubbery as pencil erasers and not much bigger. A Spanish tortilla under those short ribs was splendid, with tender potatoes layering meat discs. One that came with another entrée was dry and crumbly. Free dollars for an ear of corn is nonsense.

You'll forgive and forget that if you order dulce de leche panqueques for dessert, though. That them last Maltosa caramel failed in a griddle-hot crisp doesn't get better than this. If you're on a first date and it's going well, giving up the first bite should get you to first base faster than Chase Utley facing a 3-0 count. Should it be shipping up to be a last date, think about stashing any hard that wanders within fork range. (A tres leches cake across the way would be good cause to withdraw your weapon. If it's just because bread pudding strikes.)

Blond + Piss is unlikely to knock anyone's socks off — at least not anyone who goes out hoping to maximize something beyond good realizations of things they could for the most part do the ourselves. But maybe a home-style restaurant is just what this neighborhood, which last year proved unable to support Anadi, has been wanting. A mix of customers spanning about 75 years in age on a random weekday certainly makes it seem that way.

If you want to join this happy crowd, just be sure to choose a chowline evening, and tablemates who know the magic of turning how light bulbs and a wheezing air compressor into orients on a starry night.

(j_pappalardo@capitalcity.net)

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WHAT'S COOKING



Dinner and a Movie at Bistrot Le Minette Mondays and Thursdays through September 8:30 p.m., pay as you go > Bistrot Le Minette's summer "dinner and a movie" series continues this month in the restaurant's garden courtyard. June films include *La Vie en Rose* (June 10) and *Endless* (June 14). Screenings begin at 8:30 p.m., so make your reservations before then. Free beers sitting at home with a bowl of popcorn. *Bistrot Le Minette*, 632 S. Main St., 215 525-8000, bistrotleminette.com

Tuesday Vegan Testing Menu at Meritage Every Tuesday beginning June 8, 5-10 p.m., \$15 > There are few things that vegans and non-vegans agree on, but there is a good chance they'll find common ground on Meritage's new vegan testing menu. Featuring dishes such as grilled Japanese eggplant with a kaffir lime curry sauce and two-thousand lentil sticky rice in a brown lentil, the four-course menu is a more-than-decent compromise between fine print and greens. *Meritage*, 590 S. 20th St., 215 865-1832, meritagephilaedelpa.com

Sabrina's Cooking Class at La Cuisine at the Market May, June 14, 5:45-7:45 p.m., \$65 > Brunch at Sabrina's has long been one of Philly's worst-kept secrets (just take a look at the around-the-block line), and now the recipe for the institution's beloved stuffed French toast is about to become one, too. After La Cuisine's Sabrina's-centric cooking class (led by "brunch master" chef Lacey Silverman), you may never have to leave the 48-minute wait again — though we bet you'll keep going back for the original. *La Cuisine at the Market*, Reading Terminal Market, 12th and Arch streets, 215-923-1170, laccuisineatthemarket.com

Fifth Annual Great Chefs Fundraiser Tue., June 15, 6-9 p.m., \$250-\$600 > Join Marc Vetri and a roster of chefs that would make a Top Chef casting director proud for a fundraising event to benefit Anne's Lemonade Stand Foundation for Childhood Cancer (annelemonadestand.org). Lineups include Nate Appleman, John Besh, Chris Bianco, Tom Colacino, Jose Garces, Massimo Moriconi and Jonathan Waxman will generate and cook Philadelphia Navy Yard, Building 143, 5660 S. Broad St., 215-732-3473, setrfoundation.org/events

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By Drew Lazar




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► NOW SEATING

Brown Betty Petite | Mothers-daughter team Linda and Noranda Brown unveiled their latest Brown Betty location — their third, joining spots in Natick and Rittenshouse — on Monday. The shop carries cupcakes, 6-inch layer cakes and healthy options "Nudies," no sugar-added desserts sweetened with fruit. Customers will be able to phone in pickup orders, too, a feature that their 20th Street storefront is too small to accommodate. Hours: Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; closed Sun. Shops at Liberty Place (179th Street entrance), 3625 Chestnut St., 215-988-1888, brownbettydesserts.com.

Chef's Portraits | The Cheesecake exhibit at the Franklin Institute now has a much-worthier cook to go along with it: Steve Paves, who just debuted his Frog Burger stand on the Franklin's front lawn, is running this "pop-up cafe" on the museum's second-floor terrace. Paves and chef Alessandro Pious have developed a menu that's mainly Middle Eastern (beets, garbanzo, grape leaves, shawarma, etc.). They also serve wine and beer plus thematic cocktails like the "Nefertiti" (liberal Raspberry Chambord, pomegranate). It's open to museum guests only. Franklin Institute, 222 N. 20th St., 215-448-1255, 8 a.m.

► LITTLE BITTLES

The CPV-sponsored **A Movable Feast** happy hour, which runs Thursdays from 5 to 7 throughout summer, kicks off tonight at **Moe's Tavern** (225 Market St.) with Lefts, Stella Artois and Huguobins beer specials, plus free eggs. The venue changes weekly; check cripshere.com/movablefeast for the latest. ► The Pavillion Village location of **Green Live Cafe** (3649 Lancaster Ave.) will hold its grand reopening tomorrow, June 13, from 4 to 6 p.m. Free coffee, food and music. ► **The Headhouse** (125 Lombard St.), a relic of 2nd-floor Philly Beer Week co-founder Bruce Nicholas, opens today. ► Al Fresco diners should keep an eye on **Pond** (1837 E. Passaic Ave.) — they'll soon debut a two-to-one person drink table situated in the shadow of their backyard garden.

Got A Tip? Please send restaurant news to dave.bell@citypaper.net or call 215-733-4900 ext. 218.

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NOTES

FROM THE WEEKEND



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